

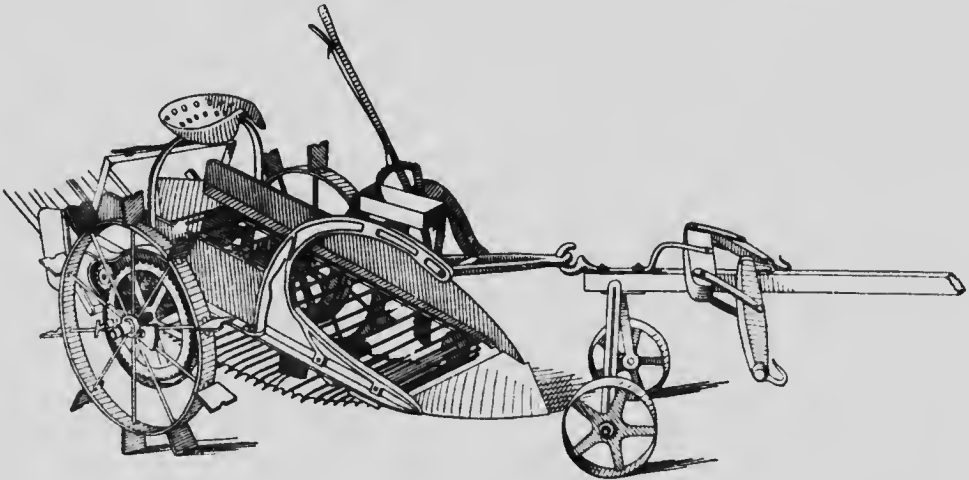
## DIGGING POTATOES.

If potatoes have not been affected with late blight or rot the best time to dig them is as soon as the tops have died, if the weather is favourable. Potatoes are usually dug just after the corn is harvested or before the frost becomes severe enough to freeze the soil to a depth of an inch or so. This time of digging is usually chosen as a matter of convenience and quite irrespective of when the stalks die, as the latter dry up in many places about September 1, and often before, and the potatoes are frequently not dug until about a month afterwards. When the soil is well drained and not wet there is not much danger to the crop by leaving it in the ground for this length of time, but if there is no disease the sooner they are dug the better.

Potatoes which have been killed by late blight will usually rot as soon as the conditions are favourable, and for this reason a diseased crop is better left in the ground, as the tubers which are diseased will most of them show signs of rot before they have to be taken up on account of frost and they need not be picked up at all. If diseased potatoes are dug and stored as soon as the tops are dead, the disease will be almost certain to develop in the pit or cellar and healthy tubers will rot from contact with the diseased ones. It is not good practice to dig diseased potatoes early and pile them in the field. It is better to delay digging as long as possible and then put the potatoes in a cool, well ventilated cellar where the disease may be checked. Potatoes in wet soil should be dug sooner than those in that which is drier and well drained.

Potatoes should be dug in dry weather so that when they are taken to the cellar or store-room they will be perfectly dry. If the tubers are housed when wet the conditions become very favourable for the development of the disease which may affect them and for the rotting of the healthy potatoes from contact with those thus affected.

Where there are large areas to be dug a good potato digger is essential. Not only will a potato digger raise the crop more economically than a fork or plough but with it the grower is more likely to get his crop dug and picked up while the weather is fine, which is a great consideration. There are a number of good potato diggers now on the market which will dig up and leave on the surface of the soil practically all the tubers.



POTATO DIGGER.